

To: U.S. Department of State
CA/ OCS/ PRI
Adoption Regulations Docket Room SA-29
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CHILDREN'S ISSUES

DEC 16 A 11:16

BUREAU OF
CONSULAR AFFAIRS

Re: State/ AR-01/ 98

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the mother of an internationally adopted daughter and have had a very bad experience with an adoption agency licensed by a US State. I am writing to voice my concerns about the accreditation and monitoring of adoption agencies under the Hague Convention. In my opinion it is not a good idea for this regulation to be handled by US State agency licensing entities or by others involved with international adoptions including adoption agencies or their affiliates.

One of the driving forces behind Hague is to minimize the abuses which are well known to occur in international adoption. It seems to me a conflict of interest for States to accredit agencies as it is their role to support the agency and protect the child, not the prospective parent. I was given to believe that filing a complaint with the State involved in my situation was not worthwhile, as the standard they hold agencies to do not preclude much of the unethical behavior that goes on. We need an authority that accredits and monitors agencies, holds them to standards of practice comparable to that of other professions and provides needed information to adoptive parents.

I understand that some of the entities now applying for the position of accrediting and monitoring adoption agencies are those who currently should be performing this very task and clearly are not. For the Hague Convention to live up to it's potential, the accrediting agency must be responsive to complaints/concerns, make information and complaints available to the public, hold adoption agencies to a much higher standard than they currently do, provide education about what to expect from an agency and put systems in place to allow for grievances to be resolved without the prospective parent jeopardizing their adoption. This requires an entirely independent authority.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan L. Hertz